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**Date:** 2/21/2018 4:18:41 PM  
**Subject:** MOVING FORWARD IN 2018 ON OPERATION: SAFE COMMUNITY

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## ***MOVING FORWARD ON OPERATION: SAFE COMMUNITY***

One year into the new five-year Operation: Safe Community crime plan, we are making progress on many fronts.

A key part of the plan is the hiring and retention of more Memphis police officers. In the past year, under the leadership of Mayor Jim Strickland, Memphis has hired 169 new commissioned officers, and 85 percent of eligible officers have signed retention agreements coupled with bonuses funded through private sector contributions to the Crime Commission.

The Tennessee General Assembly enacted legislation imposing tougher sentences for convicted felons possessing guns. Thanks to Senator Mark Norris in particular for his leadership on this legislation. With passage of the legislation, we launched the FED UP. GUN CRIME. JAIL TIME communications effort to convey the consequences of engaging in gun crime in an effort to change behavior.

District Attorney Amy Weirich implemented community prosecution models in three separate police precincts as part of the plan, the result being stronger partnerships among law enforcement, citizens in those precincts, and prosecutors.

Under Shelby County Mayor Mark Luttrell's leadership, we developed an assessment center concept to direct non-violent youthful offenders away from the juvenile court system and address underlying factors to reduce the odds of future delinquent (criminal) behavior.

The Operation: Safe Community plan calls for efforts to reduce the number of repeat offenders, and we have obtained funding through the Workforce Investment Network for a transitional work program coupled with other services to help ex-offenders move in the right direction.

Earlier this month, as part of the plan, District Attorney Weirich began the violence intervention /focused deterrence model to curtail criminal activity by certain high-risk individuals. (For more on this initiative, see the article below.)

We are excited about the movement we are seeing on many fronts as we move into the second year of the plan. We are blessed with committed leaders in both the public and private sectors who are determined to make our community safer and insure that every citizen, regardless of income, race, age, or neighborhood, lives in a safe environment.

The Crime Commission is the ONLY entity in our community charged with overseeing implementation of a community-wide plan to reduce crime. And we depend totally upon private donations. We thank the many of you who are supporting us financially already. If you are not doing so already, we hope you will consider donating online. And we hope all of you will be strong advocates for implementation of the Operation: Safe Community plan.

Bill Gibbons  
President

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## ***OPERATION COMEBACK LAUNCHED BY SHELBY COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY AS PART OF LOCAL CRIME PLAN***

District Attorney Amy Weirich began Operation Comeback this month with a call-in of selected high-risk offenders who were warned to stop the violence while at the same time being offered a wide array of social services to help them change their lifestyles if they choose to do so.

Federal, state, county and city law enforcement representatives met with the selected offenders and sent a clear message that they would be held accountable for any future crimes with swift and certain prosecution and punishment. But social service providers offered help with education, job training and placement, housing, substance abuse counseling, and other forms of assistance.

Operation Comeback uses a focused deterrence approach of both support and accountability that has been used successfully in other cities such as Boston. It is part of the broader Operation: Safe Community crime plan for Memphis and Shelby County. D.A. Weirich chairs the overall implementation efforts for the plan.

The initiative recognizes that a relatively small number of offenders account for a disproportionate amount of the crime in our community. The felony offenders selected initially are on probation or parole and were required to attend the call-in. Collectively, they have been arrested 260 times, are known to have victimized 111 people, and have been convicted of 141 crimes, including aggravated assaults, felony thefts, aggravated burglary, and domestic violence. (They have been reported victims of crimes themselves 25 times.)

The Public Safety Institute at the University of Memphis will be responsible for evaluating the implementation of the initiative and its level of success as it moves forward.

At the call-in, retired MPD Colonel James Kirkwood, now executive director of the Memphis Christian Pastors Network, delivered a strong message to the offenders, urging them to take advantage of the opportunity being offered and stop their violent behavior.

For more on Operation Comeback, <https://www.scdag.com/news/item/1499->

operation-comeback .

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